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THE  
USURPATION  
OF THE  
PRIESTHOOD,  
Or the Scourge of  
SACRILEGE.  
A  
SERMON



Preached at *Trinity Church* in *Cambridge*,  
in the *Lecture Course*.

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*To be a memorial to the children of Israel, that no stranger, which  
is not of the seed of Aaron come near to offer incense before the  
Lord, that he be not as Corah and his company, Numb. 16.40.*

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*Communijure gentium sanctum est, ut ne mortales quod deorum immor-  
taliū cultui consecratum est, usurpare possint, Cicero.*

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It is stated that the following is the result of the investigation:

THE  
USURPATION  
Of the  
PRIESTHOOD  
Or the Scourge of  
SACRILEGE.

NUMB. 6. 38.

*The censers of these sinners against their own souls, let them make them broad plates for a covering of the Altar: for they offered them before the Lord, therefore they are hallowed, and they shall be a sign unto the children of Israel.*

**I**T is the Divine Aphorisme of the great Apostle Saint Paul, Rom. 15. 4. *Whatsoever things were written afore time, were written for our learning: And this whatsoever, is a very large and comprehensive word, and relates* *The Introduction.*  
F f not

not only to dogmatical and doctrinal truths, but to practical examples, to matters of Fact as well as Faith: all which are recorded and filed up in Holy Writ, and serve as patterns for our imitation or instruction, to make us the more cautious and wary in the steering of our course from the shipwreck of others, that we split not our selves upon those rocks, nor be swallowed up of those quicksands, wherein they have perished. *This is the use we are to make of examples, that we our selves be not made examples; and we are diligently to observe and peruse History, that we become not a Story to posterity.* The Text is part of a Story, and History is a relation of things past, the sayings and doings of our Ancestors. And if we look back a little to the beginning of the Chapter, we may from thence take the rise of these words, and retrieve the occasion of the History: there we find mention of *Corah's* rebellion, as the ring-leader and chief actor in it; together with *Dathan* and *Abiram*, and two hundred and fifty men as his complices and confederates in his conspiracy. All these combined and headed together in an open affront offered to the publick authority of *Moses* and *Aaron*, the Prince and Priest of the people.

2. These they charged and challenged in an high strain of insolent intrusion into that place and office, unto which they were not designed of God; and for domineering & lording it over their brethren. *And they gathered themselves together against Moses & Aaron and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is amongst them; wherefore then lift ye up your selves above the congregation of the Lord?* Num. 16. 3. Nor was it enough for them to word it by way of contestation, and to beard them to their face, unless they commented upon their mutinous speeches, by the like presumptuous attempts and undertakings; For *the two hundred and fifty men took every man his censur, and put fire in them, and laid incense thereon,* verse 18. which of right belonged to the Priest; whereas *Corah* and his crew were but the sons of



Levi at the best, and *Dathan* and *Abiram* of the Tribe of *Reuben*; neither of which had any authority at all to intermeddle with the Priest-hood. And albeit they agreed and joined together in the same common sin, yet were they differenced and distinguished in the punishment. As for *Corah* and his rebellious rout, they were removed and swept away with a strange and unheard of miracle; *The earth cleaving asunder* under the unsupportable weight of so unprofitable a burden, opening her devouring jaws to swallow them up, *who went down quick into the pit*, verse 31, 32, 33. But as for the two hundred and fifty that offered incense, they did thereby incense the fierce wrath of God, and it fared with them as with *Nadab* and *Abihu*, *who offered strange fire, and perished by fire in as strange a manner*. And there came out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense, verse 35. And lest that so signal and exemplary a punishment should be buried in oblivion with the sufferers, God takes a special care and order that the memory thereof should be commended & transmitted to posterity: And whereas the punishment seized but upon few, the example should reach unto all; and this is the reason of the strict command and charge of God to *Moses*, and of *Moses* to *Eleazer* the son of *Aaron* the Priest, in the words of the Text, *The censers of these sinners, &c.*

In which portion of Scripture we may consider these three specialities.

The division  
of the Text.

1. A description, and that double; *The one general of the persons here spoken of, (sinners against their own souls.) The other special of the sin of these persons, who presumed to offer incense, and took the honour unto them, and yet were not called as was Aaron.*

2. A direction of God himself, touching the disposing of these censers, the instruments of their sins, *Let them make them broad plates for the covering of the Altar.*

3. The reason of the direction, and that threefold.

1. The oblation of them, *For they offered them before the Lord.*

Four doctrinal conclusions.

2. The Consecration which followed upon the oblation; there fore they are hallowed.

3. The commemoration of the use and benefit of the example to posterity; And they shall be a sign to the children of Israel.

I shall cast the whole bulk and body of the Text into a fourfold proposition, or so many doctrinal conclusions.

1. Presumptuous and peremptory offenders are sinners against their own souls.

2. The usurpation of the Priesthood under the Law, or the office of the Ministry under the Gospel, (for both these agree in their substance, though differing in some formal Rites, and in several modes and administrations;) I say the usurpation of the Ministry is a sin against a mans own soul.

3. Those things that are separated and set apart to publick worship, and thereby consecrated unto God, must not be alienated in the property, and perverted to a profane and common use.

4. The sins and punishments of our Ancestors should serve as so many signs and examples unto succeeding generations.

I.  
The first conclusion.  
Sinners against their own souls.

1. I begin with the first proposition; Presumptuous and peremptory transgressors are sinners against their owne souls.

But how can this be (may some men say) seeing every sin is committed against God, as the proper object; it being nothing else then *Avoué*, a transgression of the Divine Law, which is hereby injured and offended. This is no Gordian knot that stands in need of the sword of Alexander to cut asunder; The doubt is easily assoyled and wiped away with a wet finger, for all sin is against God, as the object, against the soul of the sinner as the subject of it: Against God for the dishonour, the sinner for the danger; against God as an offence, the sinner for the guilt and punishments.

Three manner of ways.

Three manner of ways there are whereby men may be

be said to sin against their own soules.

1. The purity of the soul.

2. The peace of the soul.

3. The safety of the soul.

First, men sin against the purity of the soul, for every sin hath a *Macula* a spot or stains not only adherent, but inhering also in the nature; it makes an impression of a blot and blemish upon the conscience, and after the manner of the Snaile, leaves a slime behind it, whereby it may be discovered and traced out. There is not any noysomness or nastiness of nature that may compare with that of sin, which is joined hand in hand with uncleanness.

1.  
The purity of  
the soul.

There shall be a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, Zach 13. 1. And goes under the name of *pollutions*, 2 Pet. 2. 20. *pollutions*, or filthinesses, in the plural number. Hence is it compared to the loathsome vomit, not of a man, but dog; to the durty mire and puddle wherein the unclean swine delights to wallow and welter it self. The Dog is returned to his vomit, and the Sow to her wallowing in the mire. 2. Pet. 2. 22. Sometimes we find it resembled by the unsavoury and poysonous damp which rotten carcases exhale and breath forth from the open graves, *Ram. 3. 13*; elsewhere it is likened to the dirt & filth that is gathered under the nails, the stinking sweat of the body, the very excrements themselves which nature severs from the purer nourishment, and casts forth into the draught. Saint James implies and intends as much in his *periphrasis* and *metaphors*, wherefore lay apart all filthiness, and superfluity of naughtiness, James 1. 21.

Secondly, Men sin against the peace of their souls, This being the grand incendiary that sets all on fire; and raiseth combustion both in the greater and lesser world; the great make-bate and peace-breaker; that divides betwixt God and the Soul; Four iniquities have separated betwixt you and your God, *Isa. 59. 2*. that divides betwixt the soul and it self, as being the chiefest enemy to its own peace and comfort, *Ubi peccatum ibi procella*, Where sin goes before, there a storm and tempest follow after;

2.  
The peace of  
the soul.

3.  
The safety of  
the soul.

no sooner was *Jonah* embarked for *Tarshish*, whether he fled through disobedience, but forthwith God dispatched after him a blustering, and a boisterous wind, as a Pursuant purposely sent to arrest and attach him. There is no peace (saith my God) to the wicked, *Isa.* 57. 21.

Thirdly, *Men sin against the safety of their souls.* The temporal and eternal safety, For the wages of sin is death, *Rom.* 6. 23. The first, the second death, *1<sup>st</sup> John*, 2. 18. *John*, as *Naxianzen* speaks of it, and that by way of *Alma*, being every way as due unto it, as wages to the common Souldier. There is not a presumptuous sinner but is a *felo de se*, that in a most unnatural and desperate manner layes violent hands upon himself; and is not onely accessory to his own ruine, but the chief Actor and Author of it, *O Israel thou hast destroyed thy self*, *Hos.* 13. 9. *Thou*, not *I*, as is made good by the *Antibesis*, *But in me is thy help*. This is the true ground and reason of that passionate and melting wish of God in the behalf of his people, *Ezek.* 33. 11. *As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die O house of Israel? That God who cannot die himself, wills not the death of the wicked; so he saith and swears (as I live.) O felices nos* *quorum causa jurat Deus, O miserrimos si nec juranti credimus*, how happy men are we for whom God is pleased to swear! how extremely wretched must we needs be, if we will not believe him upon his oath. Seek not death in the error of your lives, and pull not destruction upon your heads by the works of your own hands. It is the wise mans counsel, *Wisd.* 1. 12. what do wicked men but seek their own death in the error of their lives? What else do they but pull destruction upon their own heads, by the works of their own hands? What do they but perish wilfull, and willingly through their own default? for they are not inevitably compelled to sin by any outward force and violence; nor are they any way necessitated by any fatal decree and destiny. There is no predestination of men

(2) *Tertul. de*  
*Penit. cap.*

to sin, but punishment; no predetermining or preordaining to offend God by sin, but to suffer for it, as a just reward and recompence, (b) *Neq. enim ipsa iustitia iusta dicitur, si puniendum reum non invenisse sed fecisse dicatur;* Justice it self should be unjust if God should be the avenger of that evil wherof he is the first Author, should he make them guilty by his decree and then punish them for their guiltiness. And as for those that maintain and hold that men are (c) *predestinated to sin by an overruling and Almighty power, if there be any that believe so great an evil, non solum non credimus, sed cum omni detestatione anathema illis dicimus, We are so far from believing it our selves that we denounce the severest anathema and curse against such, with all horror and detestation. It is the Canon of the second Arausian counsel, and is reported by Prosper at the latter end of his Book.*

(1) *Illius rei Deus ultor est, cuius author non est. Fulg. ad Monim. lib. 1.*

(c) *Concil. Arausic. 2. Can. 25. Prosp. pag. 902.*

2. I come to the second proposition, the usurpation of the Priest hood under the law, and the office of the Ministry under the Gospel is a sin against the soul: *ti. 2. Non, autem, who is there that will mistake, or miss the door, and stumble at the very threshold? yet some such I meet with upon the first entrance into the point, who take away the subject of the proposition, and deny all usurpation? me thinks I hear them buzzing and whispering in my ear, yea rather lift up their voice like a Trumpet, and ring it out aloud in the words of Corah, ye take too much upon you ye Ministers of the Gospel, seeing all the Congregation of the Lord are holy: every one of them, and the Lord is amongst them, ver. 3. And although it may suffice by way of answer, to such a bold exception, that it is the language of rebellion; and just cause of fear there is, that while men speak in the words of Corah, they perish in the gainsaying of Corah, as St. Jude hath it: and although I might retort and return their words into their own mouths, v. 7. ye take too much upon you ye sons of Levi, ye sons of Lay men: but to tug and grapple with the objection, hand to hand, and to try the strength and the fineness of it? let that be granted as true, that*

The second Conclusion

all

all the Congregation are holy every one of them with an external and federal holiness, and some in that number with habitual and saving grace; yet notwithstanding the holiness of a general and Christian, they want the holiness of a particular and special calling, that goes under the name of ordination and holy orders, that intitles them to the Ministry, and gives them though not *divine* yet *divine*, and inables them by way of authority to the offices, and the duties of it. See it in the example of Barnabas and Saul, *Acts. 13. 23.* the holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them, and when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands upon them they sent them away. Herein consists the holiness of the Ministry in separating and setting men apart to that service, in conferring of the holy Ghost, that is a spiritual and Ghostly power, which is given and received by the imposition of hands and that by means of ordination. And should men from their general and Christian callings infer that they are Priests, who are styled by St. Peter a royal Priest-hood and an holy Nation, *1 Pet. 2. 9.* they might as rationally conclude themselves to be Kings, both which are joyned together by St. John; And alike true in the same sense and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God, *Rev. 1. 6.* and yet as men may not invade the royalties of the Kingdom, so neither can they justly assume and arrogate the dignity of the Priesthood.

And if we take a cursory survey and view of all times and ages, we cannot but observe the distinction of Priest and people; the people are as those that strive with the Priest, *Hos. 4. 4.* and this striving of the people with the Priest, doth fully evince the distinction of each from other: or else they should be said to strive with themselves, the Priests lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth, *Mal. 2. 7.* He and They; He as the Lords messenger, whose lips are the storehouse, treasury, and hive of knowledge; They as the Bees that are to suck honey out of his combs. Pass we from the old to the new Testament, there we meet with Pastors and with their  
flocks:



flocks: take heed to your selves and to all the flock, to feed the Church of God, *Acts. 20. 28.* nor is it more strange and dangerous for a flock to want a shepherd then to be nothing else then shepherds and no flock at all. Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth, *Gal. 6. 6.* there were in St. Pauls time some as Catechists others as Catechumens, that were instructed, and taught by them. And if we descend and fall down to the age of Tertullian, we shall find that the whole Church was sorted into these two ranks and companies (d) *ordinem & plebem*: such as were in orders, and the common people. This necessary distinction is grounded upon the general and Apostolick Canon of St. Paul, *1 Cor. 14. 40.* (\*) let all things be done decently and in order: and how can things be done in orders, unlesse orders be maintained and kept up. For order is nothing else (as St. Augustine defines it) (e) but *parium impariumque sua cuique loca tribuens dispositio*, a right disposing and changing of things equal and unequal, assigning unto each their proper rank and station: and where there is not a due observing and keeping of their several standings in a just parity and imparity, there can be neither natural, civil, military, or Ecclesiastical order.

1. There is a natural order of the several members in the same body, and these distinct in nature and office, in dignity and in duty: if the whole body were an eye where were the hearing? *1 Cor. 12. 17* and is it not alike true if the whole body were a tongue what should become of the ear? if all were Preachers; we should be to seek and at a loss for want of hearers.

2. There is a politick and civil order of Prince and people, soveraign and subjects, some rulers, and governors, others that are ruled and governed by them.

3. There is a military or martial order in an Army consisting of several Officers and Offices, General, Colonels, Captains, Common Souldiers; all these are observable in an Army, unles it be that of Alcibiades, where-

(d) Tertul.

Apolog.

(\*) Est altitudo ad oeconomiam in qua hac duo requiruntur.

Parium in Locum.

(e) Aug. de Civit. Dei, lib. 19. cap. 13.

Four kinds of Order.

1. Natural

2. Politick.

3. Military.



4. Ecclesiastical.

(e) Such a one was *Petrus Walds*, the father and founder of the Waldenses, that took their name from him: whom *Alanus* characterizes in this manner, if he may be believed.

*Qui suo spiritu  
ductus, non a  
Deo missus no  
van scilicet  
ignavit, ut  
aliquis Prae  
lati aut Pontificis  
sine divina in  
spiratione, sine  
conscientia,  
sine libera  
predicare pra  
sumeret. Sine  
ratione. Philo  
sophus, sine vi  
sione Prophetas,  
sine missione  
Apostolus, sine  
instructione  
Didascalus.*

*Alanus contra  
Valdens, lib. 20  
cap. 10.*

(f) *Aquin in  
5. tum cap. ad  
Heb. v. 4.*

(g) *Pareus  
in loc.*

*Potest alius quisvis nobis divina gratia esse testis, sed Paulus hanc functionem docet speciali  
liter ministris esse injunctam. Calvinus in Epist. 2. ad Corint. cap. 5. 18.*

in every man would be a guide and leader, none guided or lead by others.

Ar. There is an Ecclesiastical or Church order, wherein God hath set First, Apostles. Secondly, Prophets. Thirdly, Teachers. Are all Apostles? are all Prophets? are all Teachers? the Apostles interrogation is every way equivalent, and carries with it the force of a peremptory negation: and so much is there intimated and implied, that all are not teachers, or at leastwise ought not to be so, who wanting both the extraordinary and immediate call of Prophets, and Apostles, together with that, (e) ordinary and ministerial call of common Pastors and Teachers, are not to intrude and thrust themselves into the Ministry. No man takes the honour to himself, but he that is called of God as was *Aaron*, *Exo. 5. 4.* lo here is an universal negative, no man, which is exclusive of all, takes this honour to himself, that is in a fair and legal way, as that which is offered and held forth unto him; but rather catcheth and snatcheth at it, and herein deals with the Ministry, as *Elieser* with the fat of the sacrifices, who in case the people would not give it upon the first motion, they would take it by force.

It is against the nature of any creature to elevate and raise it self above the nature of it (f) sicut aer non facit lapsum ignem, sed fit a superiore, even as the air is not made fire of it self but is converted and turned into it by a superior and an higher cause (as *Aquinas* notes upon the place,) even so in Church Policy men must not make themselves Ministers as *Novatus* was said to consecrate himself a Bishop) but must be ordained by superiours. It is a general observation of *Pareus* on those words (g) hinc liquet cur nec princeps ipse nec privatus quisquam sibi ministerii partes sumere possit: neither Prince nor private person of what rank soever can justly challenge the office of the Ministry, God hath not made them the disposers of his secrets, nor dispensers of his Sacraments, he hath not in-

trusted

trausted them with the power of absolution, *non habet St. Peters Keys at their girdle*: let them produce their warrant out of the word of God, that *Christus patens unko St. Peter Tibi dabo Claves regni calorum*, Mat. 16. 19. is a part of their commission, let them make it good upon proof that they are able Ministers of the New Testament: and that Ministers not onely of the peace, but of the *quorum tuorum remiseris peccata*, John 20. 23. whose sins ye remit they are remitted, and whose sins ye retain they are retained. But what do I speak of private persons, or the King himself to be made Minister, seeing Christ the Prince of peace did not attempt or endeavour it; Christ glorified not himself to be made an *Episcopus* Priest, but he that said unto him thou art my son this day have I begotten thee, Heb. 5. 5. and as he did it not in his own person, so neither would he tolerate and endure it in others: for when the Devil himself would needs turn Preacher, though he delivered very orthodox and sound doctrine, and afforded a notable testimony to Christs Divinity, *I know thee who thou art, the holy one of God*, Mat. 12. 24. yet Christ stops his mouth, and puts him to silence, *quia extra vocationem, as wanting the warrant of a lawful calling*. Let me but add one instance more, that the Devil would not be commanded and adjured by the sons of *Sheva* the Jew who professed themselves Exorcists and played the Conjurers, *I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye*, Act. 19. 15. that was the reason alledged by them, their wanting power and authority for the doing of it.

There is a double evil that follows upon the usurpation of the Ministry.

1. The removing of Gods boundaries.

2. A general Ataxy and disorder.

1. The first a removing of Gods bounds, a sin of an high and heinous nature, inasmuch that when God would exaggerate and aggravate the sin of his people, he describes it in this manner, *Hos. 5. 10. The Princes of Judah were like them that removed the bounds*; that is the reason of that strict command, *Deu. 19. 14. thou shalt not remove*

A double evil  
of usurpation  
of the ministry

1.

2.

3.

The removing  
of Gods  
boundaries.

thy neighbors land-mark which they of old time or thy fathers have set in thy inheritance. And shall we then remove the bounds that are fixed by God himself? the ancient of days, the Father of fathers, as Justine Martyr calls him: these bounds are set forth by God in the distinction of offices and callings, with the appropriation unto several persons; let every man abide in the same calling, wherein he was called, 1 Cor. 7. 20. Let every man wherein he is called, therein abide with God, ver. 24. there is not a word but hath its Emphasis and full weight; let every man: its a general rule and admits of no exception; let him continue or settle in it & abide in the same and not in another, ver. 25. it is Gods ordinance and hath his warrant in the expectation and assurance of his presence and protection. And in case men desert their station, and prove renegadoes and runaways from their callings, they fall under the guilt of Judas's sin, and are like unto them that remove their bounds.

2. The second evil that follows upon this usurpation, is a general Anarchy and disorder, the transforming the Church into a deform and misshapen monster, *qui lumen ademptum*; a Polephemus without an eye, a Cyclopicall kind of state, wherein no man hears or understands each other, 1 Cor. 14. 23. God is not the Author of confusion, but of peace, in all Churches of the Saints. In case then that party that claim and clepe themselves the Churches of the Saints, bring in confusion instead of peace into the Church of God, therein inverting St. Pauls rule, yea perverting the nature of God himself, in making him who is the God of peace, to be the God of confusion; they therein forfeit the honour of their denomination, and (to say no more) cease to be the Churches of the Saints. And hereby it comes to passe (as he speaks *proveniunt oratores novi, adolescentuli*; we have such a strange swarm and fire of new and (h) young Orators, that teach before they have learned, and are the masters of the unlearned, before they have been the Disciples of the learned; as Hierom complains in his Time.

Hence

2. A general Anarchy and disorder.

(h) *hic est uultus*  
*the popular*  
*barbarous;*

That learn the Potters Art at the Wheel; As Nazianzen alludes in the Proverb. Orat. prim. pag. 20.

*ut dicitur, uti dicitur*  
as he phrases it elsewhere.

Orat. 29. Yesterday Doles, to day Doctors; And may fitly take up that of Bidd. Job. 8. 9.

We are but of yesterday, and know not, or know nothing.

(h) *Ninium multi sunt, qui imperitorum sunt magistri, priusquam fuerint Doctorum discipuli.* Hieron. Epist. 8.

Hence it is, that Divine and Heavenly mysteries are handled with *unwashed hands*; and men of all sorts have entered into the (i) *sanctuary with foul and dirty feet*: hereby it comes to pass, that the word of truth is not *orthotomized* or divided aright, but rather broken in pieces by the many: And the bread of life not dealt out in a *measured* to every one *his demesure*, or just portion, but scattered abroad at random and cast away amongst the people. Hence it is that ignorance and irreverence is advanced, and cryed up; and the gravity of religion and learning decied, and despised. The necessary helps and handmaids of Arts and Sciences, Tongues, and Languages, are thought by some to be the mark of the beast; and to name the Universities, *five serio five, joco* (which was the decree of Paul the third) accounted the brand and badge of heresie. But though Israel play the harlot, yet let not Judah sin: though ignorance be canonized as a Popish Saint in the Romish Rubric, and Calendar; though ignorance be adored and worshipped as the mother of their devotion, and her children ask her blessing; yet let wisdom be justified of her children: let as many as pretend to sobriety of mind and ingenuity, and modesty of spirit, account learning and the nurseries of learning (I mean the Universities) as worthy of double honour. And let me herein applaud and magnifie the happiness of their condition to whom I now speak, who are all Prophets, or Prophets sons, and live here as in another Naib, the school of the Prophets: yea let me freely bespeak you in the word of Christ to his disciples Mat. 13. 16, 17. Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear: For verily I say unto you that many Prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which you see, and have not seen them, and to hear those things which you hear and have not heard them.

(i) *Non in pedibus sanctuarii Domini ingressi sunt.*  
Reynal. Collat. cum Mart. c. 2.

And so I pass to the third Proposition.

3. Those things that are separate and set apart to publick The third worship, and thereby, consecrated to God, they must not Conclusion.  
be

Holiness stamp'd upon sundry things under the law

1. The holy place.

2. An holy time.

3. An holy person.

4. An holy part or portion.

A double ground of the holiness.

1.

2.

1. Humane donation or dedication.

be alienated: in the property, and perverted to prophane and common use.

There were several things that had the stamp and print of holiness under the law, like unto the high Priests Mitre with this inscription, *Holiness unto the Lord.*

1. There was an holy place, when ye shall see the abomination of desolation stand in the holy places. *Mat. 24. 15.* it is the sanctuary, or Holy of Holies.

2. There was an holy time, if thou turn away thy foot from doing thy pleasure on my holy day *Isa. 58. 13.* and that was the Sabbath.

3. There was an holy person, let thy Thumim and thy Urim be with thy holy ones *Deut. 33. 8.* and that was the Priest.

4. There was an holy part or portion, which was separated and set apart as the maintenance of the holy person, which passeth under the name of the *hallowed things*, *Deut. 26. 13.*

The time will no way permit and suffer me to glance at all these, I shall only touch upon the Churches patrimony, the Ministers portion, which God himself is pleased to phrase, *Tithes and Offerings.*

There is a double ground or reason of their holiness.

1. Humane donation or dedication.

2. Divine claim and challenge.

The first ground of their holiness is *Humane Donation or Dedication*, of men devout and pious in their generations who bequeathed them to God by way of legacy or inheritance in their last will and Testament; and certainly it was as lawful for them to make God their Heir or Legatee, as any of the sons of men; and being such, he is not to be defrauded of his legacy, or dispossessed of his inheritance.

For as the Apostle tells us, *Gal. 3. 15.* though it be but a mans testament, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannuls or adds thereto; and if he adds not to it, how then can he take it quite away.

2. A second ground for the holiness of the Churches patri-

patrimony is divine claim and challenge, whereby he separates and reserves it to his own worship and service. For God is the high and mighty possessor of Heaven and Earth, the Lord Paramount of the whole world; who as he commands the seventh part of our time, so doth he require the tenth of our substance as his own peculiar, all the tithes of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree is the Lords; it is holy unto the Lord, Levit. 27. 30. and being such is not to be alienated; *inuito domino*, without the consent of the owner. And if the question be here moved whether a thing that is dedicated through ignorance or superstition, may not be altered in the use and converted to another and that a better end, the example here in the Text may serve as an answer to this query. For the Censers of Korah and Dathan even by Gods appointment must be employed for a covering of the Altar, and that because, though erroneously, yet they offered them before the Lord, therefore they are hallowed. Add hereunto the joint attestation of the heathen and that drawn from those common principles and apprehensions, which like unto so many seeds and sparkles are naturally sown and raked up in the hands of children (k) *Nos dicimus (quod pueri solent) quæ recte data sunt eripere non licet*, saith the Heathen Plato: Do but ask children and they will acknowledge this much, and subscribe unto it as an undeniable and undoubted truth. Those things that are well given, are not to be devoyed into another hand, or diverted from their main end: For though there may be an alienation from the particular end and intention of the Donors, wherein through ignorance they erred; yet from the general and ultimate end; and that is the maintenance of Gods worship, they may not, they must not be alienated.

And herein a special Caution is to be had that we transfer them not to our proper use, or translate them to our private benefit and advantage, flying upon the spoil after Saul's example, and too too nimbly fingering the wedge of gold, and Babylonish garment, which was the

(k) Plato  
Philib. Semel  
deo dictum  
non est ad usus  
humanos  
ulterius trans-  
ferendum.  
6. Decrer.  
de Regul.  
juris  
Si facta ades-  
sit, licet collap-  
sa sit jam reli-  
gio tamen ejus  
occupavit so-  
lum. Plin. 2.  
Epist. Lib. 10.  
Epist. 74. 75.



(1) August.  
Epist. 154. ad  
Publicol.

sin of Achan. The reason is rendered by great Saint Augustine, (1) *Ut appareat nos pietate ista destrueres, non avaritiâ*; That it may be evident and apparent unto all, that we have altered the property out of zeal to God and his glory, not for filthy lucre sake, and the love of Baalam's wages, the wages of iniquity; That we have not acted his part, and pleaded the cause of religion, as he did the cause of the poor. *Quorsum hæc perditio?* to what purpose is all this wast? why was not the olivment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor. This he said not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a Thief, and had the bag and bare what was put therein, John 12. 56.

There are many pretending and professing Christians, that care as little for religion as Judas did for the poor, yet would be thought affectionate well-willers and fast friends unto it. Nor is it much to be wondered at, seeing whatsoever they say and doe is for the bags sake whereof they are the Keepers; Which occasioned that great and sad complaint of Calvin upon the alienation of the Church Lands at the reformation in Geneva; I well see (saith he) we have taken away Judas his purse, and given it to the Devil. And yet nevertheless things formerly dedicated and devoted to a false, may justly be consecrated to the honour of the true God, and that by the special warrant and express command of God himself. Thus the silver and gold, the vessels of brass, of iron, of the city of Jericho must be brought into the treasury of God, Josh. 6. 19. And the wood of Baal's grove cut down by Gideon, must serve as fuel for Gideon's sacrifice, Judges 6. 26. And when things formerly abused to Idolatry are afterwards converted to God's worship and service, (m) *Hoc de istis fit, quod de ipsis hominibus cum ex sacrilegio & impiis in veram religionem mutantur*, saith Saint Augustine excellently in his hundred fifty fourth Epistle to Publicola. Herein it happeneth with the things thus converted, as to the persons of men converted and changed themselves, when of sacrilegious and impious wretches they become devout

(m) August.  
Epist. 154. ad  
Publicol.



devout and holy Christians. *This is not the perversion but conversion of the things; Like unto the paring of the nails, and the shaving of the hair of the Heathenish captive, whereby the woman was made a perfect proselyte and true Israelite.*

And if it be demanded and asked in the second place, whether it be not in the power of the State, to alienate the Churches portion, and to dispose of it to civil and common uses: Though I hold it neither prudential nor safe to reason the power of States; and it was but a piece of discretion in that *Philosopher* who would not dispute it with the *Emperour Adrian*, modestly excusing himself in that manner: *That it was but reason to yield to him, that commanded thirty Legions*. Yet so much may be truly and piously affirmed in the cause of God, and his Church; That as the rule of justice binds men to a *suum cuique* to give every man his own; so the Rule of Religion obligeth much more strongly to afford God his dues and rights, and that his part and portion should be held as sacred and inviolable. Give unto *Cæsar* the things which are *Cæsar's*; and unto God, the things which are *God's*, Matth. 22. 21. There are *que Cæsaris & que Dei*; and these must necessarily be distinguished from each other. And though the Power of States may reach to a *meum* and *tuum*, mine and thine, yet can we not conceive it to be so far extensive as to fetch in God's peculiar. And albeit we may give unto God that which is *Cæsar's*, we must not give unto *Cæsar* the things that are *God's*; lest otherwise we fall under the guilt and censure of the Heathen, in the words of *Tertulian* (n) *Majori formidine ob-* (n) *Tertul. A-*  
*servatis Cæsarem quam ipsum de Olympo Jovem*; *ye show* Polog. cap. 27.  
*more respect and reverence unto Cæsar than unto God him-*  
*self*. And in case this be done, God who is a righteous Judge adjudgeth it as flat robbery; *Will a man rob his God?* (a meer natural or Heathen man) *but ye have robbed me in Tiths and Offerings*, Mal. 3. 8. This robbing of God is a sin of an high strain and no way inferiour to Idolatry. *Thou that abhorrest Idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?* Rom. 2. 22. where by Saint Paul's *Clymax* or

gradation, sacrilege is a degree or step above Idolatry it self. And as *theft* is a capital crime and a deadly sin to the Author by the law of the Land; even so is *sacrilege* every way as punishable by the law of God. An accursed sin that carries a curse with it, and that not only to particular persons, but to a whole Nation: *Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even the whole Nation*, Mal. 3. 9. And it is worth the observing how God hath punished this sin even in Heathen men who knew not God, in bewraying the irreligion and atheisme of their dispositions, and their open dishonour & despight to their false and feigned Deities. I will only point at a double instance; the one of the *Grecians*, the other of a *Roman*.

The first Example is that of the *Grecian* who offered violence to the *Temple of Pallas*.

*Corripuere sacram effigiem manibusq; cruentis,  
Virgineas ausi Divæ contingere vittas.*

And mark what followed.

*Ex illo fluere, & retro sublapsa referri, spes Danaum.*  
Ex illo fluere the ruine of the *Grecians* flowed from hence as the immediate and the proper cause; or *ex illo fluere*, from that very time they never dawned good day, nor held up their head after.

The second Example is that of the *Roman Fulvius* the Censor, reported by (o) *Laëtantius*, who having uncovered the *Temple of Juno Lacinia*, and taken from thence *marmoreas tegulas*, certain marble tiles, therewith to cover his house; he forthwith grew distracted, and bereav'd of his wits: soon after lost his two sons in battel as they were warring in *Illyricum* & himself consumed and pined away to death. And this leads me to the fourth & last Proposition.

4. The sins and punishments of our Ancestors should serve as so many signs and examples unto succeeding generations.

There are sundry sorts of signs, *signum militare*, *signum memoriale*, five exemplars, A military, or memorial sign.

There is a *military sign* or *ensign*, the propertie whereof is to congregate souldiers together, and cause their repair to their colours; and in this respect the prophet foretold of *Christ*, he shall stand for an *ensign* to the people, to it shall the *Gentiles* seek, *Isa* 11. 10.

There

Virgil. *Æncid.*  
2.

(o) *Laëtant.*  
*de orig. error.*  
*lib. 2. cap. 8.*  
*Mente captus*  
*est. & amissis*  
*duobus filiis in*  
*Illyrico mili-*  
*tantibus, summo*  
*animi dolore*  
*consumptus est.*

4.  
The fourth  
Conclusion.

There is an exemplary or memorial sign, and of this kind was Lot's wife, who had a mark of remembrance set upon her forehead, *remember Lot's wife, Luke 17. 32* and was purposely turned into a pillar of salt, for *exemplum sue uos condit, to season us with her example.* Such a sign was Corah here in the Text, as a publick monument or memorial, Numb. 26. 10. And the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up together with Corah, when that company died: what time the fire devoured two hundred and fifty men, and they became a sign, *monitum oculis expositum, sicut signum gradum; an open example exposed as obvious unto every eye, like unto a standard set up in the head of an Army, in Junius gloss* seth upon the place.

(p) Junius in Luc.

(p) Junius in Luc.

There are severall kinds of punishments.

1. *Ammonition*, that respect the instruction and correction of the party, and there are *reprehension*, that seem to intend the confusion and deduction of the offender. And there are *exemplum*, that serve as patterns and precedents unto others. (A) *Deus in singulis rebus posuit exemplorum formam, ut sit quod imitatur imitatio, prima peccata, scilicet Operatur:* God hath set the seal and stamp of examples upon the actions and sufferings of wicked men, that so he might the more justly impose upon those the imitation of former sins who will not be reformed and amended by their punishments. And it is very remarkable that God never punished any sin in a more exemplary and severe manner then that of Corah and his Rebels: for the earth opened her mouth, swallowed them up quick, and then shut her mouth upon them: (r) And yet the punishment of their death should seem a benefit, as they were not deemed worthy to live; so neither had they the privilege to die: They were forthwith inclosed and shut up in the prison of the grave, *ante sepulchrum, quam uerum* (as Operatur hath it) and buried before dead. Translated (may some men say) it was so in former times, but such like punishments are long since antiquated, and out of use. There was a carob so swallowd up quick, as it did Corah and

Three kinds of punishments.

(q) Operatur, lib. 1.

(r) Et ne beneficium de mortis in compendio consequi viderentur, dum non essent digni vivere, in nec mori concessum. Operatur, lib. v.

his *Rebellious Rout*; there is now no fire that comes down from Heaven to consume men, as it did the two hundred and fifty that offered incense: If there be any that reason in this manner, they may be returned the same answer that was sometimes rendered by *Optatus* to *Parmenion* the *Donatist*, (C) *An quia talis vindicta modo cessat ideo tibi cum tuis vindicas innocentiam.* And is it even so that because divine vengeance forbears to display & manifest it self as in former times, therefore thou and thine presume themselves innocent? nothing less! For even as Fathers are not wont to correct their unruly children in the self same manner and fashion being grown up to riper years as when they were young and tender; Even so God hath not the same discipline and method of punishment under the Gospel, which he sometime had under the *Pædagogic* of the Law.

It is *St. Chrysostorus* comparison, God doth not now so frequently scourge men with the rods of temporal chastisements, but in the stead thereof inflicteth spiritual judgements, in giving men up to their own hearts lusts, to vile affections; & which is worst of all, to a reprobate sense (as he dealt with the Gentiles) and so reserves men to eternal punishment. (r) *Ad exemplū presens pœna præcessit, secunda iudicio reservabitur*, saith *Optatus*; As the place is well restored and corrected by *Merick Causebon*, God's present punishment goes before as an example; but as for the second it is deferred and delayed, until the latter judgement.

I conclude all with the Oracle of the Wise man, *Prov. 20. 25. It is a snare to a man who devours that which is holy.*

There are three properties of a snare. 1. It is laid secretly. 2. It catcheth suddenly. 3. It holds surely. And as a bird being taken in a snare is oft-times held by the leg or wing until the evening, or the coming of the Fowler. Such a snare is an usurpation of the office of the Ministry: such a snare is the invading the part and portion of the Ministry wherein men may lie hampered and intangled, till the evening of death, till the coming of God to a particular or a general judgement: Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, It is a snare to a man to devour that which is holy, and will end in destruction.

(f) *Optat. ibid.*

(r) *Optat. lib. 1.*

